

Types of Disabilities

PHYSICAL: Physical impairment refers to a broad range of disabilities which include orthopedic, neuromuscular, cardiovascular and pulmonary disorders. People with these disabilities often must rely upon assistive devices such as wheelchairs, crutches, canes, _____ and artificial limbs to obtain mobility. The physical disability may either be congenital or a result of injury, muscular dystrophy, multiple sclerosis, cerebral palsy, amputation, heart disease, pulmonary disease or more. Some persons may have hidden (non-visible) disabilities which include pulmonary disease, respiratory disorders, epilepsy and other limiting conditions.

SENSORY: Sensory disabilities refers to individuals with visual impairments, including people who are partially sighted and totally blind, individuals with hearing impairments, including those who are deaf and hard of hearing, any combination of hearing and visual impairments, and individuals with anosmia or smell disorders.

MENTAL: Mental disabilities refer to a broad range of disabilities including developmental disabilities, psychiatric disabilities, and learning disabilities. An individual with a developmental disability is a person with a severe and chronic physical or mental impairment that limits success in several major life areas, and this impairment begins in childhood. Developmental disabilities include mental retardation, cerebral palsy, epilepsy, and autism. An individual with a learning disability may have low or high intelligence; the person simply learns below intellectual capability because of a processing disorder. Examples of learning disabilities include dyslexia, attention deficit disorder (ADD) and nonverbal learning disorder. Individuals with psychiatric disabilities have a diagnosable mental health disorder as defined by a licensed psychiatrist. A mental disability results from a chemical or emotional imbalance. Examples of mental disabilities include depression, anxiety disorder, bipolar disorder and schizophrenia. _____